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IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR

RYBAT [REDACTED]

10 FEB 71

REF [REDACTED]

1. 10 FEBRUARY EDITION "MIAMI HERALD," IN ADDITION

EDITORIAL SUMMARIZED IN REF, HAS ARTICLE ON PAGE 6 HEADLINED,
"COSTA RICA GUARDEDLY BACKS U.S. AMBASSADOR." IT IS DATE-
LINED, "SPECIAL TO THE HERALD - SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA."

ARTICLE SUMMARY^{AS} FOLLOWS:

FIGUERES AND FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO TUESDAY

ISSUED GUARDED STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR AMBASSADOR PLOEZER

^{AS} SAN JOSE NEWS^PPAPERS GAVE FRONT-PAGE DISPLAY TO U.S.

CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION INTO EMBASSY ACTIVITIES HERE.

THE ARTICLE THEN ALLUDES TO ITS 7 FEB ARTICLE
AND EDITORIAL AND ITS CALL FOR CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION
OF AFFAIR.

ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT ALL THREE SAN JOSE NEWSPAPERS
TUESDAY REPRINTED HERALD'S EDITORIAL. LA NACION REPRINTED
^{Co} COMPLETE TEXT OF ARTICLE.

FIGUERES, IN TELEGRAM TO PLOESER WHICH WAS RELEASED

* 10 February edition of MIAMI HERALD has editorial headlined "The
Congress and Costa Rica". Miami forwarded a summary of the
editorial.

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PAGE 2 [REDACTED] S E C R E T

TO PRESS, SAID ONLY THAT "THE GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA DOES NOT SHARE THE UNFAVORABLE EXPRESSIONS ABOUT YOU AND ABOUT GOVERNMENT OF THE U.S. WHICH APPEARED IN STORY AND EDITORIAL OF HERALD ON 7 FEB.

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THERE WAS NO MENTION OF [REDACTED] FACIO, IN STATEMENT APPEARING IN LOCAL PRESS DESCRIBED PLOESER AS "A MAN OF MY CONFIDENCE, AND THIS SAME OPINION IS HELD BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, JOSE FIGUERES."

FACIO NOTED HOWEVER THAT IN RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON HE HAD DISCUSSED U.S. - COSTA RICAN RELATIONS WITH ASST. SEC. OF STATE MEYERS, HIS DEPUTY, ROBERT HURWITCH; AND WITH SEC. ROGERS.

FACIO SAID, "HE ASSURED MR. ROGERS THAT U.S. WAS ADMIRERD AND RESPECTED BY GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA." FACIO SAID HE DISCUSSED WITH MEYER "DIFFERENT CHANGES THAT HAD OCCURRD IN AMERICAN EMBASSY IN COSTA RICA AND HE ASSURED ME THAT THESE CHANGES DID NOT S2GNIFY ANY CHANGE WHATSOEVER IN POLICY OF U.S. TOWARD COSTA RICA."

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FACIO MADE NO REFERENCE OF [REDACTED] ALTHOUGH

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PAGE 3 [REDACTED] S E C R E T

GOVERNMENT HAD PREVIOUSLY DENIED THAT HIS RECALL HAD BEEN
ASKED, APPARENTLY TO SAVE U.S. FROM EMBARRASMENT.

[REDACTED] IS TO LEAVE COUNTRY BY FEB 22.

IN DISPATCH ORIGINATING IN COSTA RICA, UPI
QUOTED INFORMED SOURCES AS SAYING THAT FACIO HAS ASKED FOR
"CLARIFICATION" ON [REDACTED] TRANSFER. UPI ALSO SAYS
THAT SAME SOURCES ALSO MAINTAINED THAT PLOESER WAS
RESPONSIBLE FOR [REDACTED] RECALL BECAUSE OF A CONFLICT
OVER PRIORITIES WITH PLOESER WANTING AN INCREASE IN
MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ALTHOUGH COSTA RICA HAS NO ARMY,
AND A REDUCTION IN U.S. AID TO THE COUNTRY.

IN WASHINGTON, FASCELL'S HOUSE SUB-
COMMITTEE WILL HOLD CLOSED EXECUTIVE BRIEFING SESSION ON
COSTA RICAN SITUATION AT 10:15 THIS MORNING. MEYER AND
HURWITCH ARE TO APPEAR BEFORE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRED BY
REP. MONAGAN OF CONNECTICUT IN ABSENCE OF FASCELL WHO
RECOVERING FROM BROKEN ARM.

MEANWHILE, STATE DEPT. FLATLY DENIED THAT "ANY
AGENCY OF U.S. GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY SORT
OF [REDACTED] ACTIVITY AGAINST COSTA RICAN GOVERNMENT." STATE DEPT.

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PAGE 4 [REDACTED] S E C R E T

SPOKESMAN ROBERT MCCLOSKEY SAID, "WE ARE AWARE OF ALLEGATIONS TO THIS EFFECT AND THEY ARE NOT TRUE." HE CONTINUED THAT REPORTS "HAVE PUZZLED OFFICIALS HERE PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF THE CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WHICH THE TWO GOVERNMENTS HAVE ENJOYED." HE ALSO SAID THAT STATE DEPT. WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO PLOESER APPEARING BEFORE A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON THE MATTER. HOWEVER, IT MIGHT BE INCONVENIENT NOW AS NUMBER TWO POSITION IN EMBASSY IS NOW VACANT.

THERE WERE ALSO⁶⁰ EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN FROM SENATE. SEN. HATFIELD, WHO HAD VISITED COSTA RICA IN EARLY JANUARY AND MET WITH FIGUERES, NOTED, "OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH COSTA RICA HAVE ALWAYS BEEN EXCELLENT. THIS IS A COUNTRY WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN FRIENDLY TO US. I WOULD HATE TO SEE US DO ANYTHING OR FAIL TO DO ANYTHING WHICH WOULD HINDER THIS RELATIONSHIP. COSTA RICA HAS GREAT INFLUENCE THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA AND THEREFORE IT SHOULD BE INCUMBENT UPON OUR GOVERNMENT TO LOOK VERY CAREFULLY TO, AND GUARD, THOSE RELATIONSHIPS."

ARTICLE CLOSES BY STATING THAT SEN. CHURCH HAD PREVIOUSLY VOICED CONCERN ABOUT SITUATION.

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2. FILE: [REDACTED] . GP-1

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INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-08 L-24 NSAE-00

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAN JOSE 338

SUBJECT: US CR RELATIONS

REF: SAN JOSE 322; SAN JOSE 328

1. FEB 9 ISSUE OF LEADING SAN JOSE DAILIES, LA NACION AND LA REPUBLICA, PUBLISHED SPANISH TRANSLATION OF TEXTS FEB 7 MIAMI HERALD NEWS STORY AND EDITORIAL ON ALLEGED CIA PLOT IN COSTA RICA. BOTH NEWSPAPERS ALSO GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO WIRE SERVICE REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON THAT SENATOR CHURCH AND CONGRESSMAN FASCELL HAD CALLED FOR FULL CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF MIAMI HERALD CHARGES. LATTER ACCOUNTS INCLUDED DEPARTMENT OF STATE DENIAL THAT ANY US AGENCY INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES AGAINST GOCR OR PRESIDENT FIGUERES. SAN JOSE'S TWO LARGEST RADIO STATIONS DEVOTED MOST OF MORNING NEWS BROADCASTS TO HERALD STORY AND EDITORIAL.

2. MEANWHILE, IN ADDITION TO STATEMENTS MADE AT CODEL WRIGHT LUNCHEON (SAN JOSE 328), FIGUERES LAST NIGHT SENT PERSONAL CABLE TO AMBASSADOR WITH ASSURANCES THAT GOCR DOES NOT SHARE UNFAVORABLE STATEMENTS MADE IN MIAMI HERALD ABOUT AMBASSADOR PLOESER AND USG. PREISDENT'S LUNCHEON REMARKS AND TEXT OF HIS CABLE WERE CARRIED IN FEB 9 PRESS AS WAS A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW GIVEN BY FIGUERES TO AP REPRESENTATIVE IN MEXICO IN WHICH FIGUERES ALLEGEDLY SAID QUOTE WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO PROVE (COMPROBAR) ANY HOSTILE ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF US AMBASSADOR WALTER C. PLOESER UNQUOTE. ACCORDING TO THIS ACCOUNT, FIGUERES

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ADDED THAT AMBASSADOR WAS QUOTE A POLITICALLY CONSERVATIVE
BUSINESSMAN AND SOME COSTA RICAN INTELLECTUALS DO NOT THINK
AS HE DOES UNQUOTE.

3. IN SEPARATE STATEMENT PUBLISHED FEB 9 FONMIN FACIO ALSO
REJECTED MIAMI HERALD STORY, STATING QUOTE I DO NOT SHARE THE
VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE MIAMI HERALD, ESPECIALLY THOSE REFERRING
TO AMBASSADOR PLOESER, IN WHOM WE HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE. I DO
NOT BELIEVE THAT HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY ACT AGAINST THE
GOCR AS HAS BEEN CHARGED UNQUOTE. FACIO ADDED THAT DURING RECENT
TRIP TO WASHINGTON IN CONNECTION OAS GA, HE HAD DISCUSSED CR-US
RELATIONS WITH SEC ROGERS AND ASSISTANT SEC MEYER. HE SAID HE
HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM ASSISTANT SEC MEYER THAT RECENT
PERSONNEL CHANGES IN US EMB SAN JOSE SIGNIFIED NO CHANGE IN US
POLICY TOWARD CR.

4. LA NATION EDITORIAL COLUMN THIS MORNING REFERRED TO
DON BOHNING'S MIAMI HERALD REPORT, STATING BOHNING HAD
PRESENTED DISTORTED PICTURE BECAUSE HE HAD ACCEPTED AS FACT
GOLPE RUMORS WHICH HAD ALREADY BEEN DISCREDITED IN SAN JOSE.
EDITORIAL ADDED THAT BOHNING SPEAKS SPANISH POORLY AND THEREFORE
UNDERSTANDABLY FAILED TO PRESENT TRUE PICTURE OF COSTA RICAN
SITUATION.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH STATEMENTS BY FIGUERES AND FACIO HAVE BEEN
SOMEWHAT HELPFUL IN AMELIORATING SITUATION, MIAMI HERALD REPORT
HAS DRAWN WIDE ATTENTION AND STIRRED SPECULATION AND SUSPICION OF
EMBASSY. EMBASSY BELIEVES MATTER WILL PROBABLY BE RAISED IN
THIS AFTERNOON'S MEETING OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. DECON 2/9/73.
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Press Item for the DCI

Date: 9 Feb 71
Item No. 21
Ref No.

CPYRGHT

WASHINGTON--REP. DANTE B. FASCELL, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE, SAID MONDAY HE WOULD HOLD HEARINGS TO INVESTIGATE A REPORT ALLEGING CIA INVOLVEMENT IN A PLOT AGAINST COSTA RICA PRESIDENT JOSE FIGUERES.

HIS COUNTERPART ON THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, SEN. FRANK CHURCH, D-IDAHO, CHAIRMAN OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN OVER THE SAME MATTER.

THE TWO REFERRED TO A COPYRIGHTED ARTICLE IN THE MIAMI HERALD SUNDAY WHICH SAID COSTA RICA HAS ASKED THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION TO RECALL THE REPUTATED CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA) CHIEF OF THE COUNTRY AMID RUMORS OF AN ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW FIGUERES.

Comment From UPI. Goodwin, Maury and CSDO have copies.

These comments represent the initial and tentative reaction of the Office of Current Intelligence to the attached item from the news service.